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UNITED NATIONS DECADE OF INTERNATIONAL LAW

Report of the Sixth Committee

Rapporteur: Ms. Pascaline BOUM (Cameroon)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The item entitled "United Nations Decade of International Law" was included in the provisional agenda of the fifty-first session of the General Assembly pursuant to Assembly resolution 50/44 of 11 December 1995.

2. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 20 September 1996, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include the item in its agenda and to allocate it to the Sixth Committee.

3. The Sixth Committee considered the item at its 42nd to 44th and 48th meetings, from 18 to 20 and on 27 November 1996. The summary records of those meetings contain the views of the representatives who spoke during the Committee's consideration of the item (A/C.6/51/SR.42-44 and 48).

4. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General (A/51/278 and Add.1);

(b) Letters dated 10, 11, 13, 16 and 30 September 1996 from the representative of Iraq addressed to the Secretary-General (A/51/344-S/1996/734, A/51/349-S/1996/742, A/51/363-S/1996/759, A/51/368-S/1996/760 and A/51/438-S/1996/812);

(c) Identical letters dated 10 September 1996 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Iraq to the United Nations addressed to the

Secretary-General and to the President of the Security Council (A/51/345-S/1996/739);

(d) Letter dated 18 September 1996 from the Permanent Representative of Bolivia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/51/394);

(e) Letters dated 30 September 1996 from the Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/51/462-S/1996/831 and A/51/473-S/1996/839);

(f) Letter dated 21 October 1996 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/51/537-S/1996/867);

(g) Letter dated 22 October 1996 from the Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/51/550-S/1996/872).

5. The General Assembly, in paragraph 1 of its resolution 50/44 of 11 December 1995, had requested the Working Group on the United Nations Decade of International Law to continue its work at the fifty-first session in accordance with its mandate and methods of work. Pursuant to that request, the Sixth Committee, at its 3rd meeting, on 23 September 1996, elected Ms. Felicity Jane Wong (New Zealand) Chairman of the Working Group for the session. The Working Group held seven meetings, from 1 October to 26 November.

6. At the 48th meeting, on 27 November, the Chairman of the Working Group presented an oral report on the work accomplished by the Working Group (see A/C.6/51/SR.48).

II. CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS

A. Draft resolution A/C.6/51/L.11

7. At the 48th meeting, on 27 November, the Chairman of the Working Group introduced a draft resolution entitled "United Nations Decade of International Law" (A/C.6/51/L.11).

8. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.6/51/L.11 without a vote (see para. 15, draft resolution I).

9. The representative of Lebanon made a statement in explanation of position (see A/C.6/51/SR.48).

B. Draft resolution A/C.6/51/L.13

10. At the 48th meeting, on 27 November, the representative of Australia introduced a draft resolution entitled "Electronic treaties database" (A/C.6/51/L.13), which had been proposed by the Chairman.

11. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.6/51/L.13 without a vote (see para. 15, draft resolution II).

C. Draft resolution A/C.6/51/L.6 and Corr.1 and Rev.1

12. The Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled "1999 action dedicated to the centennial of the first International Peace Conference and to the closing of the United Nations Decade of International Law" (A/C.6/51/L.6 and Corr.1), submitted by the Netherlands and the Russian Federation.

13. At the 48th meeting, on 27 November, the representative of the Netherlands introduced a revised draft resolution (A/C.6/51/L.6/Rev.1), which had been proposed by the Chairman. The revised draft resolution contained the following changes:

(a) The sixth preambular paragraph, which had read:

> "Recalling that one of the purposes of the United Nations is to maintain international peace and security, inter alia, by means of settling or resolving international disputes or situations that can cause the infringement of peace",

was replaced with:

> "Recalling that one of the purposes of the United Nations is to maintain international peace and security, inter alia, by means of adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace";

(b) In the ninth preambular paragraph, the words "for the international community" were inserted after the word "need";

(c) In the last preambular paragraph, the words "to the implementation" were replaced with the words "with the development";

(d) In operative paragraph 2, the word "Requests" was replaced with the word "Invites".

14. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.6/51/L.6/Rev.1 without a vote (see para. 15, draft resolution III).

III. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SIXTH COMMITTEE

15. The Sixth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

DRAFT RESOLUTION I

United Nations Decade of International Law

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 44/23 of 17 November 1989, by which it declared the period 1990-1999 the United Nations Decade of International Law,

Recalling also that the main purposes of the Decade, according to resolution 44/23, should be, inter alia:

(a) To promote acceptance of and respect for the principles of international law;

(b) To promote means and methods for the peaceful settlement of disputes between States, including resort to and full respect for the International Court of Justice;

(c) To encourage the progressive development of international law and its codification;

(d) To encourage the teaching, study, dissemination and wider appreciation of international law,

Recalling further its resolution 49/50 of 9 December 1994, to which was annexed the programme for the activities for the third term (1995-1996) of the Decade,

Expressing its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report[1] submitted pursuant to resolution 50/44 of 11 December 1995,

Having considered the above-mentioned report,

Recalling that at the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly the Sixth Committee established the Working Group on the United Nations Decade of International Law with a view to preparing generally acceptable recommendations on the programme of activities for the Decade,

Noting that at the fifty-first session the Sixth Committee reconvened the Working Group to continue its work in accordance with resolution 50/44 and all previous resolutions on the item,

Having considered the oral report of the Chairman of the Working Group submitted to the Sixth Committee,[2]

1. Expresses its appreciation to the Sixth Committee for the elaboration, within the framework of its Working Group on the United Nations Decade of

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[1] A/51/278 and Add.1.

[2] See A/C.3/51/SR.48.

International Law, of the programme of activities for the final term (1997-1999) of the Decade, and requests the Working Group to continue its work at the fifty-second session in accordance with its mandate and methods of work;

2. Also expresses its appreciation to States and international organizations and institutions that have undertaken activities in implementation of the programme for the third term (1995-1996) of the Decade, including sponsoring conferences on various subjects of international law;

3. Adopts the programme of activities for the final term (1997-1999) of the Decade contained in the annex to the present resolution;

4. Recalls, with appreciation to the Secretary-General, the successful organization of the United Nations Congress on Public International Law, held from 13 to 17 March 1995, which focused on the four main purposes of the Decade, as well as on new challenges and expectations for the twenty-first century, and welcomes the publication of the proceedings of the Congress;

5. Welcomes the establishment of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea[3] as a new means of settlement of disputes;

6. Encourages the Office of Legal Affairs of the Secretariat to continue in its efforts to bring up to date the publication of the United Nations Juridical Yearbook;

7. Invites all States and international organizations and institutions referred to in the programme to undertake the relevant activities outlined therein and to provide information in this respect to the Secretary-General for transmission to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session;

8. Requests the Secretary-General to submit, on the basis of such information and of new information on the activities of the United Nations relevant to the progressive development of international law and its codification, a final report to the General Assembly at its fifty-fourth session on the implementation of the programme;

9. Encourages States to disseminate at the national level, as appropriate, information contained in the report of the Secretary-General;

10. Appeals to States, international organizations and non-governmental organizations working in the field of international law and to the private sector to make financial contributions or contributions in kind for the purpose of facilitating the implementation of the programme;

11. Once again requests the Secretary-General to bring to the attention of States and international organizations and institutions working in the field of international law the programme annexed to the present resolution;

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[3] Official Records of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea, vol. XVII (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.84.V.3), document A/CONF.62/122.

12. Takes note with appreciation of the activities undertaken by the International Committee of the Red Cross in the field of international humanitarian law, including with regard to the protection of the environment in times of armed conflict;

13. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-second session the item entitled "United Nations Decade of International Law".

ANNEX

Programme for the activities for the final term (1997-1999) of the United Nations Decade of International Law

I. PROMOTION OF THE ACCEPTANCE OF AND RESPECT FOR THE PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL LAW

1. The General Assembly, bearing in mind that maintenance of international peace and security is the underlying condition for the success of the implementation of the programme for the United Nations Decade of International Law, calls upon States to act in accordance with international law, and in particular the Charter of the United Nations, and encourages States and international organizations to promote the acceptance of and respect for the principles of international law.

2. States are invited to consider, if they have not yet done so, becoming parties to existing multilateral treaties, in particular those relevant to the progressive development of international law and its codification. International organizations under whose auspices such treaties are concluded are invited to indicate whether they publish periodic reports on the status of ratifications of and accessions to multilateral treaties and, if they do not, to indicate whether in their view such a process would be useful. Consideration should be given to the question of treaties that have not achieved wider participation or entered into force after a considerable lapse of time and the circumstances causing the situation.

3. States and international organizations are encouraged to provide assistance and technical advice to States, in particular to developing countries, to facilitate their participation in the process of multilateral treaty-making, including their adherence to and implementation of multilateral treaties, in accordance with their national legal systems.

4. States are encouraged to report to the Secretary-General on ways and means provided for in the multilateral treaties to which they are parties, regarding the implementation of such treaties. International organizations are similarly encouraged to report to the Secretary-General on ways and means provided for by the multilateral treaties concluded under their auspices regarding the implementation of such treaties. The Secretary-General is requested to prepare a report on the basis of this information and to submit it to the General Assembly.

5. The General Assembly, recognizing the importance of the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict, takes note of the efforts

under way to facilitate the implementation of existing international instruments in this field.

II. PROMOTION OF MEANS AND METHODS FOR THE PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES BETWEEN STATES, INCLUDING RESORT TO AND FULL RESPECT FOR THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

6. States, the United Nations system of organizations and regional organizations, including the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee, as well as the International Law Association, the Institute of International Law, the Hispano-Luso-American Institute of International Law and other international institutions working in the field of international law, and national societies of international law, are invited to study the means and methods for the peaceful settlement of disputes between States, including resort to and full respect for the International Court of Justice, and to present suggestions for the promotion thereof to the Sixth Committee.

7. Noting the establishment of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea in October 1996 in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea,[3] States and other entities referred to in article 20 of annex VI of the Convention are encouraged to consider making use of the Tribunal for the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with article 21 of annex VI of the Convention.

8. Taking into account the suggestions mentioned in paragraph 1 of the present section and with due regard to the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General entitled "An Agenda for Peace",[4] the Sixth Committee should consider, where appropriate, on the basis of a report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization, or of the Working Group on the United Nations Decade of International Law, the following questions:

(a) Strengthening the use of means and methods for the peaceful settlement of disputes, with particular attention to the role to be played by the United Nations, as well as methods for early identification and prevention of disputes and their containment;

(b) Procedures for the peaceful settlement of disputes arising in specific areas of international law;

(c) Ways and means of encouraging greater recognition of the role of the International Court of Justice and its wider use in the peaceful settlement of disputes;

(d) Enhancement of cooperation of regional organizations with the United Nations system of organizations in respect of the peaceful settlement of disputes;

(e) Wider use of the Permanent Court of Arbitration.

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[4] A/47/277-S/24111.

III. ENCOURAGEMENT OF THE PROGRESSIVE DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AND ITS CODIFICATION

9. International organizations, including the United Nations system of organizations and regional organizations, are invited to submit to the Secretary-General of the United Nations summary information regarding the programme and results of their work relevant to the progressive development of international law and its codification, including their suggestions for future work in their specialized field, with an indication of the appropriate forum to undertake such work. Similarly, the Secretary-General is requested to prepare a report on the relevant activities of the United Nations, including those of the International Law Commission. Such information should be presented in a final report by the Secretary-General to the Sixth Committee.

10. On the basis of the information mentioned in paragraph 9 above, States are invited to submit suggestions for consideration by the Sixth Committee and, as appropriate, recommendations. In particular, efforts should be made to identify areas of international law that might be ripe for progressive development or codification.

11. The Sixth Committee should study, taking into account General Assembly resolution 684 (VII) of 6 November 1952,[5] its coordinating role with respect, inter alia, to the drafting of provisions of a legal nature and the consistent use of legal terminology in international instruments adopted by the General Assembly. States are invited to present proposals in this regard to the Sixth Committee.

12. The Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization should continue to study possible measures to strengthen the United Nations system for the maintenance of international peace and security. In that context, the Special Committee should bear in mind the debate within the United Nations, in particular in the General Assembly, of the Secretary-General's report entitled "An Agenda for Peace".

IV. ENCOURAGEMENT OF THE TEACHING, STUDY, DISSEMINATION AND WIDER APPRECIATION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW

13. Within the context of considering appropriate activities to mark the final term of the Decade's programme, States, the United Nations system of organizations and regional organizations and institutions referred to in the programme should encourage:

(a) The publication of essays on subjects of international law written by legal advisers of States and international organizations, scholars and other legal practitioners providing a useful perspective on international law as viewed from their standpoint;

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[5] See annex II to the rules of procedure of the General Assembly (A/520/Rev.15).

(b) The organization at the national, regional and international level of symposia, conferences, seminars, lectures and meetings on selected topics or themes of international law during the remaining years of the Decade to celebrate the end of it. Suggested topics for consideration could include, without limiting other suggestions, the contribution of the United Nations to international law; more effective means of implementing the rules of international law; merits or otherwise of treaties and other forms of instruments such as resolutions, declarations and so on; future topics for the International Law Commission; and the role of the International Court of Justice in the settlement of disputes and advisory opinions.

14. The Advisory Committee on the United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law should, in the context of the Decade, continue to formulate, as appropriate and in a timely manner, relevant guidelines for the Programme's activities and report to the Sixth Committee on the activities carried out under the Programme in accordance with such guidelines. Special emphasis should be given to supporting academic and professional institutions already carrying out research and education in international law, as well as to encouraging the establishment of such institutions where they might not exist, in particular in the developing countries. States and other public or private bodies are encouraged to contribute to the strengthening of the Programme.

15. States and law faculties of higher educational institutions are encouraged to include international law as a core subject in their curricula. They are also encouraged to introduce courses in international law for students studying law, political science, social sciences and other relevant disciplines; they should study the possibility of introducing topics of international law in the curricula of schools at the primary and secondary levels. They should also consider introducing public international law courses geared towards career training and the establishment of clinical programmes in various areas of international law. Cooperation between institutions at the university level among developing countries, on the one hand, and their cooperation with those of developed countries, on the other, should be encouraged.

16. States should consider convening conferences of experts at the national and regional levels in order to study the question of preparing model curricula and materials for courses in international law, training of teachers in international law, preparation of textbooks on international law and the use of modern technology to facilitate the teaching of and research in international law.

17. States, international organizations and professional and academic institutions should consider making available materials to the United Nations audio-visual library on international law proposed by the Advisory Committee on the United Nations Programme of Assistance in the Teaching, Study, Dissemination and Wider Appreciation of International Law.

18. States are encouraged to organize special training in international law for legal professionals, including judges, and personnel of ministries of foreign affairs and other relevant ministries as well as military personnel. The United Nations Institute for Training and Research, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Hague Academy of

International Law, the International Institute of Humanitarian Law, regional organizations and the International Committee of the Red Cross are invited to continue cooperating with States in this respect.

19. In connection with training of military personnel, States are encouraged to foster the teaching and dissemination of the principles governing the protection of the environment in times of armed conflict and should consider the possibility of making use of the guidelines for military manuals and instructions prepared by the International Committee of the Red Cross.[6]

20. Cooperation among developing countries, as well as between developed and developing countries, in particular among those persons who are involved in the practice of international law, for exchanging experience and for mutual assistance in the field of international law, including assistance in providing textbooks and manuals of international law, is encouraged.

21. In order to make better known the practice of international law, States and international and regional organizations should endeavour to publish, if they have not done so, summaries, repertories or yearbooks of their practice. They should also endeavour to place this material on computer networks for wider and instant distribution. The Office of Legal Affairs of the Secretariat is encouraged to continue its efforts in this regard, including through its participation in the Global Legal Information Network project.

22. The Secretary-General, in cooperation with the Registry of the International Court of Justice, is encouraged to publish, to the extent feasible and in a timely manner, the publication updating the Summaries of the Judgments, Advisory Opinions and Orders of the International Court of Justice (1949-1991),[7] at present under preparation, in all official languages of the Organization.

23. Other international courts and tribunals, including the European Court of Human Rights and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, are invited to disseminate more widely their judgements and advisory opinions, and to consider preparing thematic or analytical summaries thereof.

24. International organizations are encouraged to publish treaties concluded under their auspices, if they have not yet done so. Timely publication of the United Nations Juridical Yearbook is also encouraged.

V. PROCEDURES AND ORGANIZATIONAL ASPECTS

25. The Sixth Committee, working primarily through its Working Group on the United Nations Decade of International Law and with the assistance of the Secretariat, will be the coordinating body of the programme for the Decade. The question of the use of an intra-sessional, inter-sessional or existing body to carry out specific activities of the programme may be considered by the General Assembly.

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[6] A/49/323, annex.

[7] ST/LEG/SER.F/1 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.92.V.5).

26. States are encouraged to establish, as necessary, national, subregional and regional committees, which may assist in the implementation of the programme for the Decade. Non-governmental organizations are encouraged to promote the purposes of the Decade within the fields of their activities, as appropriate.

27. Voluntary contributions from Governments, international organizations and other sources, including the private sector, would be useful and are strongly encouraged in order to implement the programme for the Decade. To that end, the establishment of a trust fund to be administered by the Secretary-General might be considered by the General Assembly.

DRAFT RESOLUTION II

Electronic treaties database

The General Assembly,

Conscious of the obligations resulting from Article 102 of the Charter of the United Nations and the importance of treaties in the development of international law and the international legal order,

Noting that the recent expansion of the membership of the Organization, combined with an increase in international treaty-making activity, has led to the growth in the volume of work carried out by the Treaty Section of the Office of Legal Affairs of the Secretariat, and contributed to the accumulation of unpublished treaties,

Recognizing, consistent with the obligation contained in Article 102 of the Charter, the importance of the expeditious processing, registration and publication of treaties and treaty-related actions,

Welcoming the range of measures already taken by the Treaty Section of the Office of Legal Affairs to expedite the publication of the United Nations Treaty Series and to provide electronic access to the publication Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary-General through the Internet,

Desirous that all efforts are made to ensure that the Treaty Section develops a comprehensive electronic database containing all treaty depositary and registration information,

Noting the steps taken by the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group on Informatics established by the Economic and Social Council to harmonize and improve United Nations information systems for optimal utilization and accessibility by all Member States,

Noting also that the existing and proposed Internet access to United Nations treaties publications is and will be in addition to the hard-copy printed versions of such publications,

1. Welcomes the statement of objective contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Decade of International Law, to develop

a comprehensive electronic database containing all depositary and registration information and disseminate electronically treaty and treaty law-related information from the database, including on-line access;[8]

2. Recalls the request of the Legal Counsel that in order to expedite the registration and publication of treaties all Member States submit treaty texts in disk or other electronic format in addition to the certified print copy;

3. Requests the Secretary-General to continue to give priority to the implementation of the computerization programme in the Treaty Section;

4. Calls upon the Secretary-General to ensure that all necessary support is provided to expedite the publication of the printed version of the United Nations Treaties Series through the prompt provision of the necessary equipment and translation services;

5. Endorses the proposed Internet dissemination of the United Nations Treaty Series, following the same rules applicable to the printed version of the publication, in addition to the current access to the Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary-General, and recognizes that Internet access to treaties and treaty law-related information is particularly valuable in countries where the cost of maintaining complete collections of treaties in bound volume form is relatively high;

6. Also endorses the Secretary-General's exploring the economic and practical feasibility of recovering the costs of providing such Internet access to the United Nations Treaty Series and the Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary-General, subject to Member States, organizations of the United Nations system, international organizations and other non-commercial users not being charged a user fee, and presenting his findings to Member States;

7. Invites the Secretary-General to consider the possibility of translating the list of titles of treaties appearing in the publication Multilateral Treaties Deposited with the Secretary-General into the other official languages of the United Nations and disseminating such lists via the Internet, and to present a report to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session;

8. Invites the specialized agencies of the United Nations, other international organizations and Member States with depositary functions for multilateral treaties to use their best endeavours to provide Internet access to treaties and treaty law-related information as soon as practicable.

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[8] A/51/278, para. 91.

DRAFT RESOLUTION III

1999 action dedicated to the centennial of the first International Peace Conference and to the closing of the United Nations Decade of International Law

The General Assembly,

Noting that the year 1999 will mark the one hundredth anniversary of the historic first International Peace Conference, held at The Hague on the initiative of Russia,

Recalling its resolution 44/23 of 17 November 1989, by which it proclaimed the United Nations Decade of International Law, to begin in 1989 and conclude in 1999, marking the centennial of the first International Peace Conference,

Recognizing that the first and the second International Peace Conferences, as well as the League of Nations and the United Nations subsequently, have significantly encouraged the progressive development and codification of international law and thereby contributed to the maintenance of international peace and security,

Recognizing also the invaluable contribution of the first International Peace Conference to the settling or resolving of international disputes or situations which can cause the infringement of peace, by adopting the Convention for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes[9] and establishing the Permanent Court of Arbitration,

Recalling that the Final Act of the second International Peace Conference incorporated a proposal to convene a third international peace conference,

Recalling that one of the purposes of the United Nations is to maintain international peace and security, inter alia, by means of adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations which might lead to a breach of the peace,

Recalling that, according to its resolution 44/23, one of the main purposes of the Decade of International Law is "to promote means and methods for the settlement of disputes between States, including resort to and full respect for the International Court of Justice",

Recalling also that, at the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly, the Sixth Committee convened the Working Group on the United Nations Decade of International Law with a view to preparing generally acceptable recommendations on the programme of activities for the Decade, and that the Working Group has been reconvened at all subsequent sessions of the General Assembly and was requested at the fiftieth session to continue its work,

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[9] See Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, The Hague Conventions and Declarations of 1899 and 1907 (New York, Oxford University Press, 1915).

Stressing the need for the international community to continue efforts with a view to strengthening international peace and security, achieving full compliance with international law and promoting its progressive development,

Recalling that in its resolution 44/23 it requested the Secretary-General to seek the views of Member States and appropriate international bodies, as well as of non-governmental organizations working in the field, on the programme for the Decade and on appropriate action to be taken during the Decade, including the possibility of holding a third international peace conference or other suitable international conference at the end of the Decade,

Noting that the Heads of State and Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries at their ninth summit meeting reaffirmed General Assembly resolution 44/23 and the strong support of the Movement for the programme of the United Nations Decade of International Law, including the recommendation of holding a third international peace conference at the conclusion of the Decade on the occasion of the one hundredth anniversary of the first International Peace Conference,

Noting also the proposal by the Russian Federation for a third international peace conference with a view to considering international law and order in the post-cold-war world at the threshold of the twenty-first century,

Convinced that the United Nations could assist significantly with its expertise and knowledge with the development of such a proposal,

1. Considers it desirable to draft a programme of action dedicated to the centennial of the first International Peace Conference and to the closing of the United Nations Decade of International Law;

2. Invites the Governments of the Russian Federation and the Netherlands to arrange, as a matter of urgency, a preliminary discussion with other interested Member States on the substantive content of 1999 action and to seek, in this respect, the cooperation of the International Court of Justice, the Permanent Court of Arbitration, relevant intergovernmental organizations, as well as other relevant organizations;

3. Calls upon the competent United Nations organs, programmes and specialized agencies to study the possibilities of providing assistance to that end;

4. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-second session, under the item entitled "United Nations Decade of International Law", a sub-item entitled "1999 action dedicated to the centennial of the first International Peace Conference and to the closing of the United Nations Decade of International Law".